

Norma Talmadge, Alice Joyce and Elaine Hammerstein are Stars of the New Photoplays



Photoplays and Players

Miss Olive Thomas is on her way to California to join her husband, Jack Pickford. While there she will make her new picture, "Jenny," by Roy Horniman, the English novelist. Larry Trimble will direct.

Myron Selznick has purchased the screen rights to Edith Ellis' play, "The Point of View," for Elaine Hammerstein. Work on the picture will be started this week.

Truly Shattuck, long a favorite on the vaudeville stage, will be among the support of Owen Moore in his new picture, "Stop That Man."

Eugene O'Brien arrived in New York this week after making his first picture on the coast. With the completion of "The Figurehead," Mr. O'Brien is preparing for his next picture.

Henry Kolker, one of the best-known actors on the American stage, and a motion picture director of international fame, will direct the next National Picture Theater's production, "The Palace of Darkened Windows." It is laid in India.

Marcus Loew, the vaudeville magnate, will make his entry into the picture field as a producer, with Florence Moore as his star. She is now the headliner in the comedy, "Breakfast in Bed," on Broadway in New York.

Pauline Frederick is the subject of a rumor concerning a big deal of the First National circuit. It is reported that she will leave Goldwyn after the completion of "Madame X," in which she is now being directed by Frank Lloyd, and one other picture.

The Universal Company has announced its intention of building a studio in London, and sending companies to Italy and the Orient to make pictures.

Blanche Sweet and her director, Henry King, scored a big coup at Coronado Beach, Cal., when they persuaded a large number of the fashionable guests of the big hotel to take part in the hotel and beach scenes which the company visited Coronado to secure. The story, "Leona Goes A-Hunting," is one of thrills and fashion.

Ruth Stonehouse is to play the leading role in Metro's production of the stage comedy, "Parlor, Bedroom and Bath."

Extraordinary interest is being shown in the William D. Taylor production of juvenile life, "The Boy." The story is by Julia Crawford Ivers, and the present title will be changed when the picture is released.

Beanie McCoy, the actress widow of Richard Harding Davis, has been signed by William Fox to star in a series of pictures.

The J. Warren Kerrigan Company has taken over the entire cast of the old Jack Dempsey Company with the exception of Dempsey himself and his leading woman. In the picture, "The Coast of Opportunity," in which this addition to the company's personnel will be used, Mr. Kerrigan will continue to retain Fritz Brubette as his leading lady.

Milton Sills has been engaged for three Melford productions to be put out by Paramount. "The Translation of a Savage," by Gilbert Parker; "The Faith Healer," by William V. Moody, and "The Shulamite."

Leatrice Joy has commenced work as leading lady for David Butler in "Alice in Wonderland," taken from a novella of the same name, which appeared in one of the magazines.

Mitchell Lewis, hero of countless film fights, has proved his skill to be as great in the legal arena as within the ropes. He begged an hour or two from his director and hastened to court the other day where he forced the landlord of his apartment, which he had surrendered voluntarily that it might be sold, to give up a month's rent.

Jack Pickford had a narrow escape while playing the part of the Liano Kid in his latest O. Henry picture, "The Double-Dyed Deceiver." He was jumping from the top of a wagon to the ground. The horses became frightened and started, and he was thrown from the wagon. He was thrown from his perch under the hoofs of the horses. Had it not been for the quick work of his director, Al Green, who pulled him out from under, he might have been badly injured.

Claire DuBrey, the young emotional actress who was engaged to play an important role in the new Essie Barrisole picture, the name of which has yet to be given out, is now at Catalina Island on a brief vacation.

Tom Santachi writes back from the East that the Rex Beach Company, in which he is featured, has had an awful tussle with Jack Pickford the past winter and spring filming scenes near Lake Champlain. On one occasion the grease in his make-up froze on his face, cracked and fell off in flakes. On another the oil in the camera mechanism congealed so hard that it was impossible to work the device. Curiously, the name of the story being filmed in these cold blasts is "The North Wind's Malice."

The remains of Sam Sothern, brother of E. H. Sothern, the Shakespearean actor, are being taken to England for burial. Death came suddenly while Mr. Sothern was playing in a film production.

All but two of the Charles H. Hoyt farces that were the rage thirty years ago in America and England, have been purchased by Charles Ray and will be shown on the screen.

Clara Kimball Young is at work on Sir Arthur Wing Pinero's play, "Mid-Channel," which Ethel Barrymore played on the stage.

Lillian Gish is said to be not unfavorably impressed with a proposition she has received to appear on the stage in the fall.

"Sheriff Nell" is coming back. The female law-enforcing genius made famous by "Polly Moran" in Keystone comedy, will again be seen on the screen with that boisterous comedienne starred.

In his next picture William Desmond will appear in a caesock, playing the title role in Dan Hart's comedy-drama, "The Parish Priest."

Sophie Tucker, Vitaphone jazz-queen, will make a plunge into the movie realm and make a film to be called "The Meeting."

Owen Moore will next film the George V. Hobart stage comedy, "Stop That Man."

Charles Ray has purchased Booth Tarkington's "Ramsay Milholand" for future screening.

Selects Movie Types While Choir Singing In Virginia Church

Roger W. Fowler, of Fowler Plims, has returned to New York City from Pentecost, the mysterious little village in Virginia where he staged the truly rural farm comedy, "Unscrambling Eggs," written by Murray Leinster.

"Our stay in Pentecost was full of interest," states Mr. Fowler. "To begin with, we lived at the local parsonage. Can you imagine picking your extra players in church? That is just what we did, for the simple reason that during the week all the population (fifty people) was scattered about their farmsteads plowing for the spring crops."

"But on Sunday they all came together in the little village church (there are no heathen in Pentecost). To obtain the best possible view of the congregation—and the stove—my staff and I joined the volunteer choir. If it had not been for Suse Smith we might have heard the organ. By the end of the twentieth among we had completely catalogued our cast. I cannot claim that the choir was improved vocally or in appearance, but we did see the types we wanted."

"After service, with much persuasion we convinced the rural characters that 'shooting' them with a movie camera was a painless operation. At the dinner hour on the next day we assembled our extras and took the required scenes. Our experiences may sound funny, but upon my word, brother, they are true—too true."

Recently the opinion was voiced by Frank Borzage, the Capitolian director, that the big theater managers were doing the motion picture harm by mixing so much vaudeville into their programs and virtually subordinating the film scenes. Our experience may sound funny, but upon my word, brother, they are true—too true."

"After several months' experiment," writes Borzage, "the Capitol has expelled vaudeville acts from its scheme of exhibition, and at a heavy expense because it has numerous performers under long-time contracts which will now be cancelled. The management has become convinced that its patrons don't like the specialties and regard them as out of harmony with the film entertainment. The picture program is to be varied with music of a high order, which is all right because music and films are demonstrably harmonious arts."

"The cinema play must stand or fall on its own merits; any intrusion of other sorts of attraction, ostensibly to bolster it up, is a tacit reflection on the pictureplay by those who get their main support from it. It is not an intentional slur, of course, nor is it deserved. The motion picture embodies a great art that is destined to be greater. Its progressive appeal to the masses has no parallel in the world's history, and exhibitors will be wise who govern themselves accordingly and do everything possible to promote the development of pictures to the utmost."

Josephine Napoleon Crowell, who plays a role in Ethel Clayton's forthcoming production, "All in a Night," is a descendant of a general in the army of the first emperor of France. The fact was disclosed at the Hollywood studio recently as the result of questions that followed Miss Crowell's realistic description of the Grand Army uniform in those days.

Jesse L. Lasky, first vice president of the Famous Players-Lasky Corporation, announces that Willie Collier, Jr., otherwise known as Buster Collier, son of the famous comedian, has been engaged for the Lasky Stock Company, and will shortly begin work at the West Coast studios of the organization as a leading juvenile.

Mrs. H. Cooper Cliffe, wife of the well-known stage and screen actor last seen on Broadway in "No More Blondes," has been selected by Director Harley Knoles for a prominent part in "This Man—This Woman," Dorothy Dalton's latest screen vehicle.

Ethel Clayton has a dual duty in her latest picture, "All in a Night." In addition to starring, Miss Clayton planned the technical preparation of various streets and settings in Shanghai, China, where most of the action supposedly takes place.

The Birth of a Classic

Robert Louis Stevenson never had a more severe critic than his stepson, Lord Osborne. It was for him, as a youngster, that "Treasure Island" was written, and it was to him that the Famous Players-Lasky Corporation submitted Maurice Tourneur's film version of the famous pirate story for final criticism.

"The picture has preserved completely the spirit in which Stevenson wrote 'Treasure Island,'" Mr. Osborne said, after he had seen the film. "Mr. Tourneur has done a splendid piece of work. The battle between the pirates and Dr. Livesey and his supporters gave me as great a thrill as it did when my stepfather first read me the story from his manuscript. I confess I came to see the picture with fear and trepidation for I had heard that a girl was to play Jim Hawkins, but Miss Shirley Mason gives a performance which I do not believe could be excelled."

Asked how "Treasure Island" came to be written Mr. Osborne said: "Years ago, when I was a little boy of 12, I was spending my holidays in Scotland with my mother and step-father. He was an unknown and unsuccessful author named Robert Louis Stevenson, who wrote books that never passed beyond a small edition, and whose acquaintance in failure cost me many a childish pang. I knew that his books were very poor, for being a great reader I had toiled through every one of them. Indeed, they were so uninteresting that I even wondered he had as many as the 750 readers whom he claimed. Feeling that he ought to do better, I timidly remonstrated with him, pointing out that while he wrote beautifully, his fault seemed to be in the choice of subjects. But his only answer was to burst out laughing, and then to tell me with humorous impressiveness that there was certainly one thing he would never write—and that was a popular author."

"The thing that puzzled me was that he was as fond as I of Mayne Reid, Fenimore Cooper, Jules Verne and Marryat; it was not as though he didn't appreciate good books; and certainly none of the 750 readers could have possibly recognized him in the Indian, the frontiersman, or explorer, or naval officer (with accompanying midshipman) landing with secret dispatches on a hostile coast—which served to give such delight to our walks together, and always brought me home in such a glow of romance."

That idolized step-father of mine was the most inspiring playfellow in the world—which made it seem all the sadder that he was unable to write a book worth reading."

"We lived in a small house that was known in the neighborhood by the somewhat depressing name of 'the late Miss McGregor's cottage,' and here, one rainy morning, busy with a box of paints, I happened to be tinting the map of an island I had drawn. Stevenson came in as I was finishing it, and with his affectionate interest in everything I was doing, leaned over my shoulder, and the greater climax still when he wrote down the words 'Treasure Island' at the top right hand corner! And it seemed to know so much about it, too—the pirates, the buried treasure, the man who had been marooned on the island. 'Oh for a story about it,' I exclaimed, in a heaven of enchantment, and somehow conscious of his own rising enthusiasm in the idea."

"Then after writing in more names he put the map in his pocket and I can recall the little feeling of disappointment I had at losing it. After all, it was my map and had already become very precious owing to its association with pirates, and having been found in an old sea-chest that had been lost and forgotten for years and years. But my step-father took it away, and the next day at noon I was called mysteriously to his bedroom (the always spent the mornings writing in bed), and the first thing I saw was my beloved map lying on the coverlet. Still wondering why I had been summoned so specially, and not a little proud and expectant, I was told to sit down while my step-father took up some sheets of manuscript and began to read aloud the first chapter of 'Treasure Island.'"

"Thus one of the greatest, the most universal of all romances came to be written, and that I should have had a share in its inception has always been to me a source of inexpressible pleasure. Of course in any case, Stevenson was destined to become famous; sooner or later his genius was certain to receive world-wide recognition; yet had it not been for me and my trumpery box of paints, and possibly my insistence on his writing something 'interesting' there would have been no such book as 'Treasure Island.'"

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Adapting a Novel Literally Is Wrong, Says Film Director

"No popular novel should be given to a director to film with complete fidelity to the printed pages," says Frank Lloyd, the Goldwyn director. "It is apt to put upon him an impossible and thankless task, the results of which are apt to be pleasing neither to the author nor the readers of the book."

"Any screen version of a printed story should be frankly avowed as being only based upon its essentials. If that be done the director has the necessary latitude, the author is relieved from such responsibility as he may feel in the matter, and the book readers are not misled into expecting a literal transcription."

"Of course authors will not warm up to this idea," continued Lloyd, "because as a rule they are inclined to cling tenaciously to incidents that are their pet features, although those features, which may have been very interesting and effective on the printed page, may not be suitable at all for pictorial presentation. Broadly speaking, only action can be put on the screen. To meet this exigency, the director should have latitude to amplify the action of the plot within discreet limits, and to elide such unessential portions as are not suited to photoplay requirements."

Under a new contract with Universal, Eddy Polo, serial star, is to make about ten two-reel stories of circus life. In order to do this, Polo will travel one season with the Barnum and Bailey shows. Then the actor, who is an old-time performer, plans to build stories around incidents in his circus career. Instead of carrying a cast of players with him, Polo declares he will use just circus actors. He believes this will give the films real circus atmosphere. The stories of life under the big top will be filmed this fall.

The Charles Ray Productions, Inc., has just purchased fourteen of Charles Hoyt's once popular farce comedies for adaptation to the screen. Among them are the famous "Texas Steer," "A Temperance Town," and "A Temperance Town." It is not certain that Charles Ray will find any of them adapted to his uses, and they will probably be used as other screen material by the producing organization.

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The White Brand of Chorus

That it is a feasible plan to select an efficient chorus of girls who earn a living behind the counter has been denied emphatically by George White, who is at present spending six to eight strenuous working hours each day in the ballroom at the Claridge Hotel, New York, trying out the choruses for his new revue, "The Scandals of 1920."

According to Mr. White, the novice who comes from behind the counter, no matter how beautiful she may be, is not equipped to be a chorus girl, because she knows nothing of the technique of dancing. "I believe that first and last a chorus girl should be able to dance, and dancing, whether it be eccentric, aesthetic, soft-shoe or ballroom dancing, requires ballet technique as a fundamental."

"To be sure, in viewing a dancer's finished product, the audience seldom considers that a few simple steps gracefully executed on the stage mean years of training in the relentless ballet fundamentals. That's why I say the novice, no matter how beautiful she may be, is not equipped to be a chorus girl."

"A few dancing lessons and the shop girl should be able to qualify in the chorus of the most ambitious Broadway production," declares one producer. But Mr. White insists this is an utter impossibility. To measure up to his chorus standards a girl must know how to dance; her dancing must be in harmony with his own skillful dancing, with Ann Pennington's winsome steps, and with the art of the agile La Sylphide; nor may the "George White" chorus girl be lacking in the essential feminine pulchritude that Broadway demands of its choruses. Whether blonde or brunette, she must be good to look upon."

As a result of this rigid and inflexible standard Mr. White has set for himself in making up his chorus the girls who are selected for "The Scandals" revue are among the highest salaried chorus girls in the country. But he believes they are fully deserving of the money they earn, for they are not only terpsichorean experts and beautiful girls to boot, but he says they have all the cleverness, self-reliance, adaptability and histrionic gifts that have been set forth as the traits of the shop girl which are supposed to fit her especially for the musical comedy chorus.

Lon Chaney, whose performance as "The Frog," the cripple, in "The Miracle Man" established him as one of the foremost character actors of the screen, plays two roles, each as definite in characterization as was his former success in "Stevenson's 'Treasure Island.'"

"The Rose of China," the Asiatic thorn bush brought by Morris Gest direct from the original flower plot laid out by the first Manchus, will be allowed to gain some further Broadway education next summer before returning to the land of chop suey. The flower was originally transplanted to the Lyric Theater last fall, but, notwithstanding that Morris Gest swore off the show, the book of "Aphrodite" that Confucius himself had boasted the show, the somewhat necessary public didn't seem to like the plant so well."

Bernard Durning, who had the leading part in "The Gift Supreme" and will play the lead in "The Sowing of Alderson Creek," is the husband of Shirley Mason, the actress.

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